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THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

Results from the Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carer's 1998 show that the majority of Australians (89%) live in a private home with at least one other person. This is also the case for three-quarters of people with disabilities (table 7.15).

Paradoxically, people with disabilities are more likely than others to live alone. About 18% of all people with disabilities live alone, compared to 6% with no disability. As many as one in eight with profound or severe restrictions (see definitions below) live alone and must rely on ex-household carers. Disability has a greater impact on the living arrangements of people aged 15 to 64 than it does for older people.

Of all people with disabilities, 58% are aged 15 to 64, and of those with profound or severe restrictions, one in ten lives on their own. In this age group, 15% of people with a disability live alone, compared with 7% of those with no disability.

Older people (those aged 65 and over) are more likely to live alone, regardless of whether or not they have a disability. Many older people living alone have a history of living in a family home, from which children have moved on and spouses or partners have died or needed out-of-home care. Some 28% of older people with no disability lived alone, compared with 27% of those who have a disability, and 20% who have a severe or profound restriction.

Nursing home and aged care hostels continue to make a contribution. Some 7% of older people live in cared accommodation because of their high level of need for support. Retirement villages specify mature age limits and are intended for retired people, but are not necessarily targeted to people with disabilities. Some villages have only independent housing, some have cared accommodation, and others have a mix of accommodation options. The 4% of older people who live in retirement villages include people with and without a disability. Almost half of retirement village residents reported a need for help or supervision, some or all of the time, with self care, mobility or communication.

7.15 LIVING ARRANGEMENTS, By Age Group and Disability Status - 1998

Level of restriction associated with disability					
	Profound/ severe core activity(a) restriction	All with disability(b)	No disability	All persons	All persons
Unit	%	%	%	%	'000
AGED 0 TO 14					

Lives in a private dwelling	%	99.2	99.0	99.6	99.5	3,893.6
Lives in a non-private dwelling						
In cared accommodation	%	0.5	0.2	—	—	0.9
Other non-private accommodation	%	0.3	0.7	0.4	0.5	17.9
Total	%	0.8	1.0	0.4	0.5	18.8
Total	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	..
Total	'000	144.6	297	3,615.3	..	3,912.3

AGED 15 TO 64

Lives in a private dwelling						
Alone	%	10.3	14.5	6.5	7.9	980.1
With at least another person	%	84.2	82.9	92.3	90.8	11,330
Total	%	94.5	97.4	98.9	98.7	12,310
Lives in a non-private dwelling						
In cared accommodation	%	3.8	1.0	—	0.2	22.0
Other non-private accommodation	%	1.7	1.6	1.1	1.1	145.0
Total	%	5.5	2.6	1.1	1.3	167.0
Total	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	..
Total	'000	510.1	2,088.1	10,389	..	12,477

AGED 65 AND OVER

Lives in a private dwelling						
Alone	%	20.3	27.4	27.8	27.6	626.3
With at least another person	%	45.5	57.3	69.6	63.0	1,429.8
Total	%	65.8	84.6	97.4	90.5	2,056.1
Lives in a non-private dwelling						
In cared accommodation	%	32.2	13.2	0.5	7.3	166.8
Other non-private accommodation	%	2.0	2.1	2.1	2.1	48.3
Total	%	34.2	15.3	2.6	9.4	215.1
Total	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	..
Total	'000	481.2	1,225.2	1,046	..	2,271.2

Lives in a retirement village(c)	%	8.4	5.0	2.2	3.7	83.5
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ALL PERSONS

Lives in a private dwelling

Alone	%	13.2	17.7	6.4	8.6	1,606.4
With at least another person	%	69.7	75.5	92.5	89.2	16,653.3
Total	%	82.9	93.2	99.0	97.8	18,259.7

Lives in a non-private dwelling

In cared accommodation	%	15.4	5.1	—	1.0	189.7
Other non-private accommodation	%	1.7	1.7	1.0	1.1	211.2
Total	%	17.1	6.8	1.0	2.1	400.9

Total	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	..
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Total	'000	1,135.9	3,610.3	15,050.3	..	18,660.6
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Lives in a retirement village(c)	%	3.6	1.7	0.2	0.5	88.8
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(a) Core activities comprise communication, mobility and self care.

(b) Includes those who do not have a specific restriction.

(c) Retirement villages can include private and non-private dwellings (including cared accommodation).

Source: Disability, Ageing and Carers: Summary of Findings, Australia (4430.0).

Disability definitions

Disability identification: a person has a disability if he/she has one of the following conditions, that has lasted or is likely to last for six months or more:

- loss of sight (not corrected by glasses);
- loss of hearing (with difficulty communicating or use of aids);
- chronic or recurring pain that restricts everyday activities;
- breathing difficulties that restrict everyday activities;
- blackouts, fits or loss of consciousness;
- difficulty learning or understanding;
- incomplete use of arms or fingers;
- difficulty gripping;
- incomplete use of feet or legs;
- a nervous or emotional condition that restricts everyday activities;
- restriction in physical activities or physical work;
- disfigurement or deformity;
- needing help or supervision because of mental illness or condition;
- head injury, stroke or other brain damage with long-term effects that restrict everyday activities;
- treatment for any other long-term condition that restricts everyday activities.

Specific restrictions are:

- core activity restrictions; and/or
- schooling or employment restrictions.

Core activities are:

- self care - bathing or showering, dressing, eating, using the toilet and managing incontinence;
- mobility - moving around at home and away from home, getting into or out of a bed or chair; and using public transport;
- communication - understanding and being understood by others: strangers, family and friends.

Core activity restriction may be:

- profound - unable to perform a core activity, or always needing assistance;
- severe - sometimes needing assistance to perform a core activity;
- moderate - not needing assistance, but having difficulty performing a core activity; and
- mild - having no difficulty performing a core activity, but using aids or equipment because of disability.

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